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SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

OCTOBER TERM, 1957

No. — 664

MANUEL RODRIGUEZ TRADING CORPORATION
AND MANUEL RODRIGUEZ,
Petitioners

v.

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

PETITION FOR A WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO THE UNITED STATES COURT OF CLAIMS

PAUL D. PAGE, JR.,
Washington Building,
Washington 5, D. C.

DECEMBER, 1957

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Manuel Rodriguez Trading Corporation and Manuel Rodriguez, by their undersigned counsel pray that a writ of certiorari issue to review the judgment of the United States Court of Claims, entered in the above case on July 12, 1957.

Opinion Below

The opinion of the Court of Claims is not yet reported but it is set out as Appendix A to this petition.

Jurisdiction

The judgment of the Court of Claims was entered on July 12, 1957 (R. 69), and timely motions for rehearing by both parties were denied on October 9, 1957 (R. 110).

The jurisdiction of this Court is invoked under 28 U.S.C. 1255(1).

Questions Presented

The Manuel Rodriguez Trading Corporation[1] bought two ships from the Government. Some months thereafter, with the approval of the Maritime Commission, it sold them to an al , thereafter bringing timely suit to recover $164,199.60 which it claimed had been illegally exacted from it in connection with the sales. The Government counterclaimed for (among other things) the sum of $49,852.01. The Court below held that the Government was entitled to recover the $49,852.01 and retain the $164,199.60, *all as damages;* dismissed the petition; and entered judgment on the counterclaim for $49,852.01. The questions presented are:

(1) May the United States recover as damages from a United States citizen sums of money which would have been payable to the United States under a contract with a non-citizen, which contract could have been executed only in violation of pertinent Federal law?

(2) May the Court of Claims make a finding of fact and render judgment thereon in the amount of $49,852.01 when such finding and judgment is without evidentiary support and demonstrably based on testimony and exhibits specifically excluded from the evidence?

Statutes Involved

The statutes involved are the Merchant Ship Sales Act of 1946 (50 U.S.C. Secs. 1737 and 1739), Public Law 423, 80th Congress, Sec. (b), and the Shipping Act, 1916 (46 U.S.C. Secs. 808 and 839). These are printed as Appendix B to this petition.

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[1] Hereinafter "plaintiff". All acts were performed by it. Manuel Rodriguez was made a party to answer the counterclaim, by order of the Court below.

Statement

In order that this statement may not be regarded as less than candid we point out: *first*, by F.F. 22, R. 97, the court finds that *in selling the tankers to plaintiff* the Maritime Commission relied upon representations that they were purchased for operation under the flag of the United States; and *second*, by F.F. 34, R. 108-109, the court finds that plaintiff was acting, in effect, as agent for the purchasing agency of the Argentine Government and intended to accomplish the transfer of the tankers to that agency. In its opinion, p. 12, R. 80, the court below admits that plaintiff a citizen acquired the tankers *as a citizen* "thereby circumventing the provisions of law regarding sale to a non-citizen". As to this plain *non sequitur* we point out briefly that the *only* sale to a non-citizen was by plaintiff in strict conformity with applicable law (Section 9 of the Shipping Act, 1916); that when the tankers were sold to plaintiff they became plaintiff's property, the property of a citizen; that plaintiff by purchasing the tankers gained no right to operate the tankers *except* under the American flag, and no right to sell them to a non-citizen; and that *when the Maritime Commission expressly approved the sale of the tankers to the Argentine purchasing commission with transfer to Argentine registry and flag*, it could not possibly have relied upon a representation that the tankers were to be operated under the American flag. A brief upon the *merits* of this case will prove beyond shadow of doubt that nothing in the case "circumvents" Public Law 423, 80th Congress, *which in pertinent part, is a limitation on the power of a government selling agency, and in no way affects sales by private parties.*

The following statement should be considered in the light of these four important facts: (1) At no time involved in this case could the Government have sold these two ships to a non-citizen of the United States. (2) The Government has

received from plaintiff, a United States citizen, $164,199.60 more than the Government was legally authorized to charge a United States citizen for the ships,[2] *which excessive amount would be increased to $214,051.61 if the judgment on the counterclaim could stand. (3) At all times involved in this case plaintiff could (with the approval of the United States Maritime Commission, which plaintiff secured) sell these two ships to a non-citizen of the United States. (4) None of plaintiff's actions in this matter have been found fraudulent or illegal by the Court below.*

The fact-findings of the Court below show:

(1) Plaintiff, a United States citizen, by contract dated April 6, 1948 bought two small tankers (CAPITAN and SUGARLAND) from defendant at a price in accordance with the Merchant Ship Sales Act of 1946 and the applicable rules and regulations of the selling agency, the United States Maritime Commission. (F.F. 1 and 2, R. 83).

(2) The contract contained the following provision:

"The buyer agrees, if it shall be determined by the Commission upon examination of the (each) vessel, that the vessel lacks or contains desirable features as defined in clauses (2) and (3) of Sec. 3(d) of the Act, then such purchase price shall be decreased, within the limits of the floor price of the vessel, or increased, by such amounts, if any, as may be determined by the Commission pursuant to said clauses." (F.F. 8, R. 84).

(3) Under the clause just quoted plaintiff paid an additional $28,756.81[3] (F F. 8, R. 84).

(4) Plaintiff was charged in accordance with the terms

[2] See *Norton Clapp* v. *United States*, 127 C. Cl. 505, cert. den. 348 US 834, and *A. H. Bull Steamship Company* v. *United States*, 123 C. Cl. in which the Government did not seek certiorari.

[3] The charge could not legally be made against a United States citizen. *A. H. Bull, etc. supra.*

of its contract and the Commission's policy governing sales to United States citizens, the sum of $42.00 for repairs. (F.F. 9, R. 86).

(5) The price plaintiff paid for the two tankers was decreased according to law by $135,442.79, the cost of putting them in class to operate under the United States flag. (F.F. 32, R. 107-108).

(6) On October 21, 1948, plaintiff, pursuant to Section 9, of the Shipping Act, 1916, sought Maritime Commission approval of sale by plaintiff of the two tankers to a purchasing commission of the Argentine Government, with transfer of flag and registry; the Commission approved on December 7, 1948 (with a condition, as shown immediately hereafter) and the vessels were thereafter sold and transferred by plaintiff (F.F. 5, 6, R. 83-84).

(7) The Commission's approvel was "upon the condition that, prior to the issuance of formal Transfer Orders in evidence of the approval of the transfer of these tankers to Argentine ownership and registry as above set forth, any and all allowances made to your corporation for placing these vessels in class[4] and all monies due and owing the Commission by our corporation in connection with the sale by the Commission shall be paid (or provision therefor by way of deposit be made) to the Commission and upon the receipt from your company of a waiver of any claims for allowances" (F.F. 31, R. 105-107).

Plaintiff (invoking Section 1491, U.S.C. as the basis of jurisdiction) sued in the Court below for (1) $135,442.79, payment of which was exacted from plaintiff for the Maritime Commission's approval of plaintiff's sale of the two tankers to a purchasing commission of the Argentine Government, with transfer of flag and registry, and (2) $28,-

[4] In *Norton Clapp, supra*, it was held that the requirement of a money payment for such approval was unlawful, and that amounts paid pursuant to such requirement may be recovered in the Court of Claims.

756.81, paid under the sales-contract clause quoted in (2) above for "desirable features", an aggregate $164,109.60.

Defendant counterclaimed for (among other amounts) $49,852.01 as the cost of unrecouped repairs less $42.00 claimed by the Maritime Commission and paid by plaintiff as such cost.

The Court below held that all three items just set out constituted "damages defendant has suffered"; dismissed the petition because "defendant is entitled to retain" the first two items; and rendered judgment on the counterclaim for the third item of $49,852.01 (Opinion 14, first, second, and third paragraphs, R. 82).

Reasons Why the Writ Should Be Granted

The Court below has decided in this case important questions of federal law which have not been, but should be, settled by this court. In so doing, the Court below has so far departed from the accepted and usual course of judicial proceedings as to call for an exercise of this Court's power of supervision.

I

In this unique decision (the Court below cited no case and none can be cited to sustain it) the Court of Claims has laid down a precedent as broad and general in its application as it is cynical in essence.

It is this: a party forbidden by law to take certain action (and without any finding that he could or would take such action, of course) may recover (and retain) what would have been the fruits of the illegal action had he taken it, as damages.

And not only this: such damages may be recovered (and retained where previously exacted on unlawful grounds) from a party *guiltless of fraud or unlawful action.*

The principle (?) laid down then, is far-reaching in its

importance, and may not be minimized by the fact that the two tankers were sold to plaintiff under a "dead statute", the Merchant Ship Sales Act of 1946. The decision is not a construction of that Act, and its baneful effect is in no way limited to transactions arising under it, a number of which incidentally, are still in litigation.

Notwithstanding its finding of fact No. 17 (R. 90) that the sale of war-built vessels such as these tankers to non-citizens was prohibited by law after March 1, 1948[5] the Court below explains its judgment as follows:

> "We believe the defendant should be put in the same position as if the transfer had not been made to plaintiff. That is to say, had the tankers been sold directly to the Argentine Naval Commission, the Government could have charged $135,442.79 as class allowance and $28,756.81 for desirable features.[6] These sums had been paid to the defendant and we hold that the defendant is entitled to retain them. The only *other item of damages*" (emphasis supplied) "defendant has suffered is the cost of unamortized repairs which would be charged to non-citizen purchasers."[7]
>
> The findings show that "during the time that the Commission was authorized to sell to non-citizens,[8] it made a charge to the buyer[9] of the unrecouped cost

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[5] Public Law 423, 80th Cong. prohibited and prohibits *the Government* from selling to non-citizens. It does *not* prohibit plaintiff from selling to non-citizens.

[6] Something Public Law 423, 80th Cong. *expressly forbids*. The Government *could not* sell to the Argentine Naval Commission or any non-citizen and hence could not charge *anybody* these amounts, which under the law and the Court of Claims' decisions in *Clapp* and *Bull supra* could *not* be charged any citizen-purchaser.

[7] There could be no such non-citizen purchasers, and, therefore, no such charges.

[8] Which ended before the Commission sold them to plaintiff, a citizen.

[9] Meaning a non-citizen buyer.

of repairs made subsequent to January 1, 1947, less depreciation at the rate of $6,000 per month for each month of operation. This, for the SUGARLAND would have amounted to a charge of $49,894.01. If [10] the policy respecting sales to citizens required a charge of the cost of unrecouped repairs made after July 1, 1947, the charge in the case of the SUGARLAND was $42. only, or $49,852.01 less."

Under Section 6 of the Merchant Ship Sales Act, *supra*, the sales price to non-citizens was merely the minimum statutory price.[11] Therefore, plaintiff's purchase as a citizen saved $49,852.01 [12] which defendant could have charged a non-citizen.[13] The Government lost that amount [14] and is entitled to recover the same under its counterclaim." (Opinion p. 14, R. 82).

The quotation immediately foregoing with the factual footnotes thereto, incontestably proves that the Court below has answered the first "Question Presented" in the affirmative. In other words, taking as true all facts found by the Court of Claims, that Court has *erred as a matter of law* by holding that the United States may (a) recover from a citizen of the United States $49,852.01, and

(b) retain an aggregate sum of $164,199.60 ($135,442.79 plus $28,756.81), *all three items as damages*, because if defendant had sold the tankers to the non-citizen to whom

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[10] Importantly, this "if" should be "as". See F.F. 32. R. 168

[11] Obviously garbled. Section 6, in pertinent part, and *prior to Public Law 423, 80th Cong.*, authorized such sales "at not less than the statutory sales price."

[12] Plaintiff *being* a citizen, could only purchase "as a citizen" and "saved" nothing at a citizen's price.

[13] Since defendant *could not sell* to a non-citizen it *could not* charge a non-citizen $49,852.01 or *anything at all*.

[14] This conclusion is indisputably erroneous, and in fact, completely in conflict with the underlying findings of fact.

they were *legally and with defendant's approval* sold by plaintiff, defendant "could have charged" plaintiff's vendee the above amounts, although the Court expressly finds that defendant, the United States, was prohibited by the law of the United States from selling the tankers to plaintiff's vendee or to anybody it could have charged such amounts.

We respectfully submit that when the Court of Claims lays down a broad and general precedent at variance with all accepted principles of law[15] then (and especially because failing review by this Court, the injured party is without the protection of any judicial consideration other than that of the Court of first instance) there is clearly before this Court an important question of federal law which has not been but should be decided by this Court, and that when, as here, a Court of first instance (there being no possible intervening appellate review) issues an opinion flatly opposed to a hitherto-undisputed principle of law that Court so far departs from the accepted and usual course of judicial proceedings as to call for an exercise of this Court's power of supervision.

II

With respect to the judgment on the counterclaim for $49,852.01, not only did the Court below err as a matter of law (as shown above), but it made a mock of judicial procedure by founding its judgment on testimony and exhibits *specifically excluded from evidence*, and which of course, plaintiff had no reason to rebut. Because this fact must

[15] In his "Treatise on the Law of Damages" (Callaghan & Co., 1916, pp. 17-18) Sutherland says that "It may be assumed as *an undisputed principle* that no action will lie to recover a demand or a supposed claim for damages if, to establish it, the plaintiff requires aid from an illegal transaction, or is under the necessity of showing and depending in any degree upon an illegal agreement to which he was a party."

be almost as amazing and at first blush *incredible* to this Court as it is to the writer of this petition, who entered the case subsequent to its decision by the Court of Claims, it is necessary to prove it forthwith.

The only *evidence* in this record with respect to the unrecouped cost of repairs chargeable against a non-citizen purchaser, which item is represented by the judgment on the counterclaim for $49,852.01, is in the testimony of James L. Pimper, Esq., (Tr. 229, 230, Tr. 240-241), and Defendant's Exhibits 100 and 101. Neither the Pimper testimony nor the exhibits refer to the two tankers here involved, repairs made to them, or the cost of such repairs. They reflect only the policy of Maritime Commission with respect to charges to non-citizen buyers for such repairs and contain no facts which can be contended to support the finding of the Commissioner and Court that the unrecouped cost of repairs to the SUGARLAND made subsequent to January 1, 1947 less depreciation at the rate of $6,000 per month for each month of operation would have amounted to $49,894.01.

The judgment on the counterclaim is unquestionably and obviously based on Tr. 248-249, Tr. 250-255, Tr. 196-205, and Defendant's Exhibits *for identification only* Nos. 95, 96, and 102. Reference to the cited pages of the transcript, especially pages 201 249, 251 and 254, shows that the "testimony" of Messrs Fetsko, Langley, and Hutchinson, and the three exhibits which contain the figures from which the judgment on the counterclaim was made up stand in the record *only as an offer of proof*.

Because the judgment on the counterclaim is not supported by any evidence in the case, *and no contention to the contrary can be made*, that judgment cannot stand. It would be impossible to *manufacture* a situation wherein a court

could depart further from the accepted and usual course of judicial proceedings, or more unjustifiably hoodwink counsel and penalize litigants thar is here the case. The foundation of a money judgment on data specifically excluded from the evidence by the trial court is surely the absolute antithesis of judicial procedure.

Conclusion

The facts found by the Court below establish

(1) That defendant acting through the Maritime Commission has damaged plaintiffs in the amount of $164,199.60, for which amount plaintiffs were and are entitled to judgment against the United States.

(2) That this damage has been aggravated by the judgment of the Court below in the amount of $49,852.01, which judgment has no support in the evidence, is based upon data which the Court below specifically excluded from evidence, and would not be supportable in law even if the rejected "evidence" had been accepted as such by the Court below.

(3) That the Court below has found as facts that the two vessels were lawfully sold first, by defendant to plaintiff, and second by plaintiff to a non-citizen of the United States, but without any finding of fraud or illegality has concluded that the transaction should be treated by the Court as if it were an illegal sale by defendant to the non-citizen, and the illegal fruits thereof awarded to defendant as "damages".

The precedent-force of this unprecedented decision cannot be over-estimated, cannot command conscientious support, and in the last analysis would probably be of incalculable damage to its present beneficiary, the government of the United States.

This is in addition to the destructive financial result to the personal plaintiff, who has not received justice at the hands of the Court below.

For the reasons stated, it is respectfully submitted that this petition for a writ of certiorari should be granted.

PAUL D. PAGE, JR.,
Washington Building,
Washington 5, D. C.

DECEMBER, 1957

APPENDIX A

IN THE UNITED STATES COURT OF CLAIMS

No. 50197

(Decided July 12, 1957)

MANUEL RODRIGUEZ TRADING CORPORATION AND MANUEL RODRIGUEZ

v.

THE UNITED STATES

Mr. Homer C. Clay for the plaintiff.

Mr. Edward L. Metzler, with whom was *Mr. Assistant Attorney General George Cochran Doub*, for the defendant.

OPINION

LARAMORE, *Judge*, delivered the opinion of the court:

This is a suit by plaintiff, Manuel Rodriguez Trading Corporation, to recover sums of $135,442.79 and $28,756.81 paid to the U. S. Maritime Commission. The defendant counterclaims for damages, and Manuel Rodriguez has been joined as a party plaintiff under rule 23 of this court.

The $135,442.79 was paid to the Maritime Commission by plaintiff under an agreement made in December 1948 that the Commission would approve plaintiff's sale of the tankers *Capitan* and *Sugarland* to the Argentine Naval Commission and their transfer to Argentine registry and flag, which was accomplished. The $135,442.79 represented reductions in the statutory sale price of the two tankers which had been acquired by a contract dated April 6, 1948. The reductions were allowed plaintiff by the Maritime Commission under section 3 (d) (1) of the Merchant Ship Sales Act of 1946, 60 Stat. 41, as amended 62 Stat. 1196, 1199. The $28,756.81 represents the Maritime Commission's charges for "desirable features" not found in standard vessels, payment for which was agreed to by plaintiff in the contract dated April 6, 1948, and by an agreement made in December 1948.

Plaintiff contends that it is entitled to recover the $135,442.79 under the decision of this court in *Norton Clapp* v. *United States*, 127 C. Cls. 505 and asserts that the Maritime Commission did not have authority to condition its approval of the sale and transfer by requiring that the class allowance be refunded, and that such requirement was also a breach of contract.

Plaintiff contends it is entitled to recover the $28,756.81 paid for "desirable features" under the decision of this court in *A. H. Bull Steamship Co.* v. *United States*, 123 C. Cls. 520. It contends that the statutory formula provided by the Merchant Ship Sales Act, *supra*, requires the cost of desirable features to be added to the statutory sales price and then depreciated, and that this results here in the cost of desirable features being wholly absorbed and lost, although the floor price is maintained. Plaintiff further contends that a citizen's purchase of tankers after March 1, 1948, for the purpose of resale to aliens, would not violate Public Law 423, 62 Stat. 38, if the Maritime Commission approved.

The defendant contends that plaintiff procured the two tankers from the Maritime Commission and obtained price reductions of $135,442.79 on the basis of misrepresentations that it was acquiring the tankers as a United States citizen for operation under American flag and registry, and that plaintiff, knowing that sales to noncitizens were expressly prohibited after March 1, 1948, by Public Law 423, was not acquiring the tankers for American flag ownership and operation, but in order to sell and transfer them to the Argentine Naval Commission for operation under Argentine flag and registry.

Public Law 423 provides in pertinent part as follows:

> (b) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a), no contract of sale under section 6 of the Merchant Ship Sales Act of 1946 shall be made after March 1, 1948; and nothing contained in this or any other Act shall be deemed to authorize the United States Maritime Commission to charter any war-built vessels (as defined in the Merchant Ship Sales Act of 1946) to any person who is not a citizen of the United States (as defined in the Merchant Ship Sales Act of 1946).

The government further contends that it is entitled to judgment on its counterclaim for the losses and damages sustained by reason of plaintiff's misrepresentations.

The facts as found by the Commissioner and adopted by the court are as follows:

The Manuel Rodriguez Trading Corporation was, from January 1947 to February 1951, a New York corporation with its principal place of business at 220 Broadway, New York City, New York. Only 80 shares of the corporate stock were issued. During the corporate existence Manuel Rodriguez was the president and actually operated as sole owner. As of September 2, 1948, he had formally acquired the 30 shares issued January 30, 1947, in the name of his wife, Adela Rodriguez, a citizen of Cuba. As of December 29, 1950, the assets of the corporation were distributed to the two remaining stockholders, Rodriguez receiving $336,191.81 and Louis Russell $4,255.59. A certificate of dissolution was filed February 1, 1951, dated December 29, 1950.

Manuel Rodriguez has been impleaded personally and by order of the court joined as a party plaintiff. The term plaintiff as used herein refers to the corporation or to Manuel Rodriguez personally.

Plaintiff by contract dated April 6, 1948, acquired from the U. S. Maritime Commission two T–1 tankers, the *Sugarland* and the *Capitan*, at a price of $887,019 each. The price was in accordance with the Merchant Ship Sales Act of 1946 and the rules and regulations issued pursuant thereto as set forth in the Maritime Commission's General Order 60. The contract provided for a reduction of a price by an amount equal to the cost, as determined by the Commission, which would be required to enable the Commission to deliver the vessels in class with valid certificates of classification and inspection in accordance with the minimum requirements of the rules and regulations of the American Bureau of Shipping and the U. S. Coast Guard Marine Inspection. Plaintiff filed claims for such price reductions and was allowed $135,442.79, *i. e.*, on the *Sugarland* $4,094 for repairs and $15,259.37 for predelivery and maintenance expenses, and on the *Capitan* $94,067 for repairs and $22,022.42 for predelivery and maintenance expenses.

Title to the *Sugarland* and *Capitan*, respectively, was transferred to plaintiff on June 8, 1948, and August 20, 1948. Plaintiff thereafter, on October 21, 1948, applied for approval to sell the tankers to the Argentine Naval Commission and to transfer them to Argentine registry and flag. On December 7, 1948, the Commission approved the sale and transfer on the condition that the price reductions or class allowances were paid. Plaintiff agreed and deposited a $200,000 check of the Argentine Naval Commission. The tankers were consequently transferred from United States registry. On June 3, 1949, plaintiff requested that the Maritime Commission reconsider its requirement that the $135,442.79 be paid, but the Maritime Commission adhered to its decision, and denied a request for reconsideration.

The Maritime Commission also determined that the tankers contained desirable features and pursuant to the purchase contract and plaintiff's consent charged plaintiff the depreciated value of the desirable features, *i. e.* $27,650 on the *Sugarland* and $1,105.96 on the *Capitan*. The Maritime Commission also determined that under Article IV of the contract applying to a citizen sale plaintiff should be charged only $42 for unamortized repairs made on the *Sugarland*, deducted this amount from a deposit and refunded the balance.

The Government's Counterclaim

The Merchant Ship Sales Act of 1946 provided that the Maritime Commission might sell certain Government-owned war-built vessels to a citizen of the United States, as defined in the act, at a "statutory sales price." In the case of tankers statutory sales price was defined in the act (section 3 (d) to mean "an amount equal to 87½ per centum of the prewar domestic cost of a tanker of that type" subject to adjustments set forth therein. In the case of a tanker the adjustments could not reduce the sales price to less than 50 percent of the domestic war cost and the price of the *Capitan* and *Sugarland*, T-1-M-BT tankers, was fixed at the floor price of $887,019. Under certain conditions sales to noncitizens were authorized "at not less than the statutory sales price" but Senate Joint Resolution 173, Public Law 423, 80th Congress, 2d session, approved February 27, 1948, expressly prohibited sales to noncitizens

after March 1, 1948. The questioned transactions occurred subsequent to March 1, 1948.

In November, 1947 an employee of the Maritime Commission, John E. Jacobsen, advised Rodriquez that there was a possibility that ten T-1 tankers might be purchased from the Maritime Commission for resale to Argentina. At that time the Argentine Government had a purchasing commission known as the Argentine Naval Commission located in New York City. The Naval Commission was headed by Rear Admiral Athos Colonna, and Captain Julio Mazzoli, Naval Architect, was in charge of ship inspections. On December 19, 1947, plaintiff retained Homer C. Clay and Jacobsen to represent it in bringing about the sale of ten or less tankers. Clay and Jacobsen were to receive on a contingent basis a fee of $25,000 for each tanker purchased. On December 30 and 31, 1947, Rodriguez conferred with representatives of the Argentine Naval Commission advising that the present basic sales price of the ten tankers was $887,019, but that he would sell them for $965,000 each (or less if more than five were obtained) with title and authority to change the flag, etc., the offer being subject to approval of the Maritime Commission. On February 4, 1948, Clay wired Rodriquez that there was a strong probability Congress would prohibit sales of war-built vessels to foreign countries after February 29 and urged filing an application immediately. Plaintiff and the Argentine Naval Commission then entered into a contract whereby the Naval Commission was to purchase ten tankers from plaintiff for $935,000 each and delivered two checks, payable to the Treasurer of the United States, for $1,000,000 each. The checks were certified respectively by the Chase National Bank and the National City Bank, both of New York City on February 16, 1948.

On February 18, 1948, plaintiff made written application to the Maritime Commission to purchase ten tankers at the statutory sales price for transfer to the Argentine flag stating that it was not then and never had been engaged in the shipping business. On March 1, 1948, the Maritime Commission disapproved the application but at 11:30 P. M. March 1, 1948, approved the sale of one tanker to plaintiff for transfer to Argentina.

Senate Joint Resolution 193, as stated, prohibited the sale of a war-built vessel to a noncitizen after March 1, 1948. Rodriquez was quite aware of the prohibition which had been imminent and so wrote the Argentine Naval Commission on March 5, 1948. At the same time plaintiff advised that Commission that Rodriquez was endeavoring to obtain one additional tanker on the premise the corporation was a citizen purchaser, as well as still another vessel, and that their efforts would be continued.

On March 7, 1948, plaintiff's attorney in fact, Homer C. Clay, wired the Secretary of the Maritime Commission as follows:

> APPLICATION MANUEL RODRIGUEZ TRADING CORP. HEREBY AMENDED TO ELIMINATE ALL REFERENCE TO TRANSFER OF SHIPS TO ARGENTINE REGISTRY APPLICANT DESIRES TO PURCHASE AS AMERICAN CITIZEN TERMS CASH ON DELIVERY WITH TWO MILLION DOLLARS NOW DEPOSITED WITH APPLICATION TO BE APPLIED ON PURCHASE PRICE.

On March 10, 1948 plaintiff filed a formal amendment to its February 18, 1948 application by striking therefrom:

> * * * * * * *
>
> * * * All reference to the transfer of the vessels referred to therein to foreign flag or registry and to provide that the applicant will purchase any one or more of the vessels referred to in said application as a United States citizen (applicant is a New York corporation) for operation under the flag and registry of the United States and to further provide that should applicant be granted the right to purchase any vessel or vessels, pursuant to its amended application, applicant will obtain the services of one of the established and experienced ship operating companies to operate said vessel or vessels.

On March 11, 1948, plaintiff's amended application was referred to the Maritime Commission by memorandum from the appropriate officer, the Chief of the Large Vessel Sales Division, James L. Pimper, who recommended the sale of two T1-M-BT tankers with the advice that the "applicant wishes to eliminate original reference to transfer to Argentine registry and purchase as an American Citi-

zen" and to pay cash in full on delivery. The Commission was advised that:

> Applicant claims no shipping experience but states that it will obtain the services of one of the established and experienced ship operating companies to operate the vessels when purchased.
>
> * * * * *
>
> * * * since the applicant offers to pay cash in full for the vessel, the Commission is justified in considering that the applicant possesses the necessary finanical resources.
>
> * * * * * *
>
> Applicant proposes to operate the vessels in established tankers trades, chiefly from North Atlantic ports to the River Platte and occasionally from Venezuelan ports to the River Platte.
>
> * * * * *

On March 12, 1948, the Commission approved plaintiff's application as to three T-1 tankers. However, the Navy Department requested the transfer of one tanker and the Maritime Commission on March 31, 1948, approved the sale of two tankers, the *Capitan* and *Sugarland*, "for operation under United States flag," the terms of payment to be "cash in full on delivery."

Under date of March 31, 1948, the date the Maritime Commission approved the sale for operation under United States flag, plaintiff and the Argentine Naval Commission entered into contracts relating to the *Capitan* and *Sugarland*. The contracts recited in part that plaintiff sold said tankers to the Naval Commission with a view to their transfer to the Argentine Navy, that the Naval Commission would turn over the official price of $887,019 each, and upon obtaining plaintiff's approval for transfer to the Argentine flag the Naval Commission would pay the price fixed by the offer of December 31, 1947; *i. e.*, $965,000 if 1 to 4 tankers were acquired. Paragraph G of the contracts provided that in the event a legal transfer was not possible and in the event of a disagreement over settlement the ships would be sold without loss to plaintiff, or 20 percent of the profits. In the event of United States expropriation its payment was to be immediately transferred to the Naval

Commission. The Naval Commission was also to pay all other expenses incurred, subject to its written approval.

In reliance upon plaintiff's representations that the tankers were purchased by plaintiff as a United States citizen for operation under the flag of the United States for Maritime Commission, under date of April 6, 1948, entered into the formal sales contract referred to in finding 2 for sale of the *Capitan* and *Sugarland* at $887,019 each.

The Argentine Naval Commission made the down payments on the *Capitan* and *Sugarland* on April 2, 1948, by issuing two $88,701.90 checks.

On April 28, 1948, the Argentine Naval Commission paid plaintiff the $798,317.10 balance of the $887,019 floor price on each tanker.

Plaintiff's books and accounting records show the tankers were sold to the Argentine Naval Commission in April 1948, that the tankers were purchased for resale and not for operation and that they were carried as merchandise inventory until June 30, 1948, when the books showed the Argentine Naval Commission had advanced $965,060 on sales contracts on each of the tankers. Plaintiff's Federal tax returns also show the purchases were for sale rather than operation.

Neither Rodriguez nor the corporation had ever been engaged in the shipping business and had no experience in operating tankers. No effort was made to obtain the services of a ship operating company or to hire officers or a crew.

Following the allocation of the tankers Rodriguez was in constant consultation with the Argentine Naval Commission over the control and disposition of the tankers. The Argentine representatives inspected the vessels, work plans and specifications were submitted to them in advance, and they prepared plans and specifications for repairs and sent them to Rodriguez in August 1948. Upon closing the sales with the Maritime Commission in June and August 1948 the bills of sale and master carpenter's certificate were delivered to plaintiff's attorney-in-fact, Homer C. Clay. These documents were promptly turned over to the Argentine representatives. Pursuant to arrangements between Rodriguez and Admiral Colonna, the Argentine Naval Commission also stationed its own crew aboard the tankers to act as watchmen pending the contemplated transfer.

In August 1948 plaintiff inserted an ad in the New York Journal of Commerce advertising T-1 tankers for sale: "United States flag. Immediate delivery. Principals only. All cash in dollars." A similar advertisement was inserted in the New Times of August 29, 1948. Four responders indicated a desire for foreign registry and two suggested domestic use, but plaintiff communicated with none.

Under date of August 30, 1948, however, a letter was prepared to plaintiff from the Argentine Naval Commission over the signature of Rear Admiral Colonna in which the Argentine Naval Commission purported to answer the ad appearing in the New York Journal of Commerce for August 27, 1948, and offered to purchase tankers with U. S. currency. A copy of the ad was attached to the Naval Commission's letter.

On October 21, 1948, plaintiff transmitted to the Maritime Commission its application for the approval required by Sections 9 and 41 of the Shipping Act of 1916, as amended, of a proposed sale and transfer of the *Capitan* and *Sugarland* to Argentine registry and sale to an alien, namely, the Argentine Naval Commission. The applications represented that the tankers had never been operated, and that they had been on the market for sale to American citizens for three months prior to the application but no offers had been received. The proposed sale price was represented as "actual cost of vessel to owner" payable in cash. The application attached Admiral Colonna's letter purporting to answer the ad, and represented that sale and transfer to the Argentine Naval Commisssion was desired as the tankers were unsuitable, conditions had changed, the initial "cost and repairs for the owner's account" exceeded $1,800,000 and maintenance costs were a threat to the company's solvency.

The Chief of the Maritime Commission's Bureau of Government Aids recommended that the application be denied. However, at a meeting on December 7, 1948, Homer C. Clay and Ralph Immell appeared before the Commission and, after referring to the information contained in the application, advised the Commission further that plaintiff's president had invested his entire personal fortune of $1,800,000 in the tankers, that to cut expenses crews had been reduced and guards put on board, and that plaintiff was obliged to sell the tankers or go into bankruptcy. "It

was also represented that the proposed sales price of $912,000, per tanker, adjusted for the value of the heating coils, might enable Rodriguez to break even but he stood to lose $45,000. At the hearing Mr. Clay specifically, on behalf of the plaintiff, denied any possibility of an advance arrangement with the Argentine interests whereby later approval of the sale and transfer would be sought. At the December 7, 1948 meeting the Commission by a 3 to 2 vote approved the sale and transfer "* * * upon the condition that any and all allowances made to the Manuel Rodriguez Trading Corporation for placing the vessels in class and all monies due and owing the Commission by the said Manuel Rodriguez Trading Corporation shall be paid to the Commission prior to the issuance of any orders authorizing the transfer of flag and registry of the said vessels and the company waives any claims for allowances." By memorandum of December 9, 1948, the Commission advised its Chief, Bureau of Government Aids, of its conditional approval, and on December 10, 1948 the Commission also notified plaintiff of its approval under the conditions noted above, and, because plaintiff requested that transfer orders be issued as early as possible requested a $200,000 deposit. The Commission advised that the deposit would not preclude reconsideration but "it is also understood that any future action by the Commission on this matter will be acceptable to you as final". Plaintiff accepted these prescribed conditions in a letter dated December 14, 1948, noting it "accepts and agrees" and deposited a certified check of the Argentine Naval Commission for $200,000.

Subsequently the Commission delivered transfer orders to plaintiff authorizing the sale of the tankers to the Argentine Naval Commission and their transfer to Argentine registry and flag. The conditions were not repeated in the transfer orders as neither the Commission's regulations nor practice required this.

The Maritime Commission had agreed to reconsider its action on the charges if plaintiff would accept such action as final. Plaintiff agreed to this. On June 30, 1949, Clay and Ralph Immell also filed a formal application for reconsideration repeating the same representations as were

made before the sale to the Argentine Naval Commission. They stated the sale occurred "after issuance of the foreign transfer orders" and as plaintiff had sold at the price paid the Maritime Commission it could not be reimbursed by the Argentine Naval Commission because of the refund of the class allowances. It was stated that there was no understanding that Rodriguez would appear subsequently and ask for an order to resell and that if the corporation "having purchase these ships, had let them sit idle and then subsequently sold them to the Argentine Naval Commission the allowances should be wiped out and the plaintiff should not profit by them. The Commission denied the request August 12, 1949, and plaintiff was so advised.

Prior to March 1, 1948, and subsequently, the plaintiff was acting, in effect, as agent for the Argentine Naval Commission in acquiring the tankers and that at all times plaintiff planned in one way or another to accomplish their transfer from the Maritime Commission to Argentina.

The *Capitan* and *Sugarland* were built in 1945. The Maritime Commission pursuant to the Merchant Ship Sales Act of 1946 determined that their domestic war cost was $1,774,038 each. Their 1947 costs would have been about 15 percent greater or $2,040,143.70. In March 1948 the Argentine Naval Commission offered to pay $965,000 for each vessel. The Argentine Naval Commission paid $2,202,223.87 for the tankers. According to plaintiff's available records, which do not show what occurred with respect to the $200,000 deposit made by check of the Argentine Naval Commission, plaintiff corporation made a gross profit of $153,959.29 on the acquisition and transfer of the two tankers, exclusive of the $200,000 deposit.

The Maritime Commission received a total of $1,802,836.81 for the vessels which would have cost $4,080,287.40 to replace or $2,777,450.29 less than the replacement cost.

During the time the Maritime Commission was authorized to sell to noncitizens it charged noncitizens the unrecouped costs of repairs. In the case of the *Sugarland* this would have amounted to $49,894.01 but as a supposed citizen purchaser plaintiff was charged but $42 or $49,852.01 less. The Government also counterclaims for this item.

The facts clearly show and the court has found that plaintiff was acting, in effect, as agent for the Argentine Naval Commission in acquiring these vessels and that at all times plaintiff planned in one way or another to accomplish the transfer of these vessels from the Maritime Commission to the Argentine Naval Commission.

In this climate what then is the result of such action. Plaintiff says this court's decision in the *Norton Clapp* case, *supra*, decides the question. However, we are not inclined to that view. The plaintiff in the *Norton Clapp* case acquired the ship in question in 1949 from an owner who had previously acquired the same from the Maritime Commission in 1947. In 1951 Norton Clapp contracted to sell the ship to a Finnish corporation and applied for approval of the same. The Maritime Commission approved the sale upon payment of the sum of $7,500 as "consideration for release of obligation to operate vessels under United States laws." The court in the *Norton Clapp* case held that the limitation of sale to domestic bidders was because the Maritime Commission at that time was unwilling for ships to be sold to aliens at any price and that in 1951 the reasons for the restriction were no longer present. The court further found that price had nothing to do with either the restriction or the removal and the $7,500 charge was irrelevant.

It must be borne in mind that the plaintiff in the *Norton Clapp* case was a citizen of the United States. Here the situation is different—plaintiff was acting as agent for the Argentine Naval Commission but by his actions and assertions acquired the vessels as a citizen of the United States, thereby circumventing the provisions of law regarding sale to a noncitizen. Plaintiff procured the tankers and obtained the price reductions or class allowances on the basis or representations that it was acquiring the tankers as a United States citizen for operation under the United States flag and registry, knowing that sale to noncitizens was prohibited under Public Law 423, *supra*, whereas in fact is was acquiring the vessels in order to sell and transfer them to a noncitizen.

Had the Argentine Naval Commission been permitted to purchase the tankers, certainly the United States could have

exacted the $135,442.79 and could further have charged for the desirable features.[1]

Under these circumstances we believe plaintiff is in the same position as the Argentine Naval Commission, a noncitizen, would have been had it negotiated and purchased the tankers. That is to say, the Maritime Commission had every right to charge the Argentine Naval Commission more for the vessels than it could have charged a citizen, and there is no reason to believe that such a charge would not have been made. Thus the Maritime Commission, by reason of the representation of plaintiff, lost the difference in sale price and, if fraud were present, we could think of no reason why plaintiff should be permitted to profit thereby. However, no specific finding of fraud is made in this case and in the absence thereof, plaintiff would not be chargeable under a constructive trust for the proceeds received from the sale to the Argentine Naval Commission. Restatement of the Law of Restitution, Ch. 13, sec. 202; *United States* v. *Newbury Mfg. Co.*, 36 F. Supp. 602.

Under these circumstances the Government is entitled to retain the $135,442.79 which plaintiff as a citizen saved under the floor price and the $28,756.81 charged for desirable features.

Defendant counterclaims for losses and damages sustained, *i. e.*, (a) the value of the *Capitan* and *Sugarland;* (b) the differences between the amount paid for the tankers by the Argentine Naval Commission and the amount received by the Maritime Commission, *i. e.*, $399,387.06; (c) the gross

[1] The case of *Esso Nederland N. V., etc.*, No. 689-53, decided May 8, 1957, presented a similar situation wherein a noncitizen sought relief from payment for desirable features pursuant to *A. H. Bull Steamship Co.* v. *United States, supra.* The court in the *Esso Nederland* case held that the specific intention which the parties intended and incorporated in the contract was that the desirable features were to be paid in addition to the already known floor prices of the ships. The contract provision in the instant case is exactly the same as in the *Esso Nederland* case and is as follows:

> "The Buyer agrees, if it shall be determined by the Commission upon examination of the (each) vessel, that the vessel lacks or contains desirable features as defined in clauses (2) and (3) of Section 3(d) of the Act, then such purchase price shall be decreased, within the limits of the floor price of the vessel, or increased, by such amounts, if any, as may be determined by the Commission pursuant to said clauses."

profit made by plaintiff on the illegal transaction; and (d) $49,852.01 for unrecouped repairs.

We believe the defendant should be put in the same position as if the transfer had not been made to plaintiff. That is to say, had the tankers been sold directly to the Argentine Naval Commission, the Government could have charged $135,442.79 as class allowance and $28,756.81 for desirable features. These sums had been paid to the defendant and we hold that the defendant is entitled to retain them. The only other damage defendant has suffered is the cost of unamortized repairs which would be charged to noncitizen purchasers.

The findings show that "during the time that the Commission was authorized to sell to noncitizens, it made a charge to the buyer of the unrecouped cost of repairs made subsequent to January 1, 1947, less depreciation at the rate of $6,000 per month for each month of operation. This, for the *Sugarland* would have amounted to a charge of $49,894.01. If the policy respecting sales to citizens required a charge of the cost of unrecouped repairs made after July 1, 1947, the charge in the case of the *Sugarland* was $42 only, or $49,852.01 less."

Under section 6 of the Merchant Ship Sales Act, *supra*, the sale price to noncitizens was merely the minimum statutory price. Therefore, plaintiff's purchase as a citizen saved $49,852.01 which defendant could have charged a noncitizen. The Government lost that amount and is entitled to recover the same under its counterclaim.

Since as a result of the dissolution of the plaintiff corporation, Manuel Rodriguez acquired all but $4,255.59 of the corporate assets and has been made a party plaintiff to answer the defendant's counterclaim, we hold that judgment will be entered against the plaintiff corporation and Manuel Rodriguez personally.

The plaintiff is not entitled to recover, and the petition of Manuel Rodriguez Trading Corporation is dimissed.

Defendant is entitled to recover of and from the plaintiffs, Manuel Rodriguez Trading Corporation and Manuel Rodriguez, on its counterclaim the sum of $49,852.01.

It is so ordered.

MADDEN, *Judge*; WHITAKER, *Judge*; LITTLETON, *Judge*; and JONES, *Chief Judge*, concur.

Findings of Fact

The court, having considered the evidence, the report of Commissioner George H. Foster, and the briefs and argument of counsel, makes findings of fact as follows:

1. The Manuel Rodriguez Trading Corporation was from January 1947 to February 1951 a corporation organized pursuant to the laws of the State of New York with principal place of business located at 220 Broadway, New York, New York. Manuel Rodriguez was the principal stockholder, and he, in his capacity as president, actually operated as sole owner. Hereinafter, the term plaintiff refers to the corporation or to Manual Rodriguez personally.

2. Plaintiff, by contract dated April 6, 1948, acquired from the United States Maritime Commission two T-1 tankers, the *Sugarland* and the *Capitan* at a price of $887,019 each. The price was in accord with the Ship Sales Act (50 App. U.S.C., sec. 1739) and the rules and regulations issued pursuant thereto as set forth in General Order 60 of the U.S. Maritime Commission.

3. The contract provided for a reduction of price by an amount equal to the cost, as determined by the Commission, which would be required to enable the Commission to deliver the vessels in class with valid certificates of classification and inspection in accordance with the minimum requirements of the rules and regulations of the American Bureau of Shipping and the U. S. Coast Guard Marine Inspection.

4. Plaintiff filed claims for reduction of price and reductions were allowed in the total sum of $135,442.79. Pursuant to the contract, said reductions were based on the following:

The *Sugarland*

$ 4,094.00 for repairs.
15,259.37 for predelivery and maintenance expenses.

The *Capitan*

$94,067.00 for repairs.
22,022.42 for predelivery and maintenance expenses.

Title to the *Sugarland* was transferred to the plaintiff on June 8, 1948, and title to the *Capitan* was transferred August 20, 1948.

5. On October 21, 1948, plaintiff applied to the Commission pursuant to sections 9 and 41 of the Shipping Act for approval to sell the vessels to the Argentine Naval Commission.

On December 7, 1948, the Commission approved the proposed sale to the Argentine Naval Commission.

6. On December 14, 1948, plaintiff sent a certified check for a deposit as required. The vessels were thereafter transferred from the U. S. Registry.

7. One June 3, 1949, plaintiff requested the Commission to reconsider the requirement that the allowance of $135,442.79 be paid to the Commission. The Commission refused to change it decision and upon request for reconsideration thereof, the request was denied. Plaintiff was so advised on September 12, 1949.

8. The contract of purchase contained the following provision:

> "The Buyer agrees, if it shall be determined by the Commission upon examination of the (each) vessel, that the vessel lacks or contains desirable features as defined in clauses (2) and (3) of Sec. 3 (d) of the Act, then such purchase price shall be decreased, within the limits of the floor price of the vessel, or increased, by such amounts, if any, as may be determined by the Commission pursuant to said clauses."

On June 8, 1948, plaintiff wrote to the Maritime Commission with reference to the *Sugarland*. The letter contained the following:

* * * * *

> The absence or presence of desirable features not having been determined by the Commission, in accordance with the terms of the contract of sale, we agree to pay to the Commission the cost of such desirable features chargeable to the Buyer under the terms of the contract of sale or the Commission will make an allowance, within the limits of the floor price of the vessel for the absence of such features.

* * * * *

Homer C. Clay, who was acting as attorney in fact for plaintiff, on August 20, 1948, wrote similarly relating to the *Capitan*.

The Commission determined that both on the *Sugarland* and on the *Capitan* there were desirable features and designated them as follows:

	Depreciated value
Sugarland:	
Heating coil installation	$23,284.23
Diesel generator	3,238.12
Low pressure Evaporating plant	1,128.50
Captain:	
Low pressure Evaporating plant	1,105.96
	$28,756.81

In response to a request for information as to the amount of the charge for the heating coil, the Commission on October 7, 1949, advised as follows:

* * * * *

> In this connection, your attention is drawn to Contract MCc-61155, Exhibit A, Paragraph 1; and General Order 60, Subpart A, Section 299.1 (f) (3). Pursuant to the above, the Bureau of Engineering has advised that at the time of delivery of the MV SUGAR-LAND to you there were on board certain heating coils. The unadjusted statutory sale price (87% of the pre-war domestic cost) is $24,200, against which depreciation at the rate of five percent per annum from the date of installation of such coils (September 5, 1947) to the date of title transfer (June 8, 1948) is allowed. After depreciation for this period is deducted the charge for the heating coils is $23,284.23, which will be charged to your account.

* * * * *

The depreciated values charged for the other features were derived as follows:

	Sugarland	
Diesel generator: Statutory Sales Price Unadjusted		$3,760.00
Depreciation:		
Normal: 5% from 8-31-45 to 6-8-48	$520.85	
War Service: ½% from 8-31-45 to 9-2-45	1.03	
		521.88
Amount charged		3,238.12
Floor Price of Desirable Features		2,625.00

Sugarland		
Low Pressure Evaporating Plant: Statutory Sales Price Unadjusted		$1,310 00
Depreciation:		
Normal: 5% from 8-31-45 to 6-8-48	$181 47	
War Service: ½% from 8-31-45 to 9-2-45	03	
		181 50
Amount charged		1,128 50
Floor Price of Desirable Features		900 00
Capitan		
Low Pressure Evaporating Plant: Statutory Sales Price Unadjusted		$1,310 00
Depreciation:		
Normal: 5% from 7-14-45 to 8-20-48	$203 14	
War Service: ½% from 7-14-45 to 9-2-45	90	
		204 04
Amount charged		1,105 96
Floor Price of Desirable Features		900 00

9. Due to a shortage of privately-owned tanker tonnage to meet the demand for oil, the Maritime Commission operated its tankers and kept them in repair. In cases where the tankers were sold before the Commission had recouped the repair expense from operations, the Commission required the buyer to pay a part of these repair expenses.

The *Sugarland* and the *Capitan* were sold to plaintiff pursuant to the policy governing sales to U. S. citizens and Act IV of the contract covered this repair expense.

On June 8, 1948, plaintiff wrote the Commission with respect to repair expenses on the *Sugarland* and deposited $20,834 to cover repair costs.

It was later determined by the Commission that only $42 for repair expenses should be charged and the balance of the deposit was returned.

THE GOVERNMENT'S COUNTERCLAIM

10. The Government has filed a counterclaim for the proceeds received by plaintiff from the acquisition of these two tankers and the subsequent transfer of them to the Argentine Naval Commission. In connection with the counterclaim, the Government impleaded Manuel Rodriguez personally as a party plaintiff.

11. During the corporate existence of the Manuel Rodriguez Trading Corporation, Manuel Rodriguez was the president of the corporation. The stock of the corporation was originally issued on January 30, 1947. Manuel Rodriguez was issued 49 shares, his wife, Adele Rodriguez, a citizen

of Cuba, was issued 30 shares, and one share was issued to Louis Russell. Of the stockholders, Manuel Rodriguez alone paid consideration for the stock.

As of September 2, 1948, Manuel Rodriguez acquired the stock of his wife, and as of December 29, 1950, the assets of the corporation were distributed to the two remaining stockholders as follows:

Manuel Rodriguez	$336,191.81
Louis Russell	4,255.59

The corporation was dissolved by a certificate of dissolution filed February 1, 1951, but dated December 29, 1950.

12. The Merchant Ship Sales Act of 1946 approved March 8, 1946 (60 Stat. 41), provided that the Maritime Commission might sell certain Government-owned war-built vessels to a citizen of the United States, defined in the act to include a corporation, if such corporation is a citizen of the United States within the meaning of sec. 2 of the Shipping Act of 1916 as amended. (39 Stat. 729, 46 U. S. C. sec. 802.)

The sale to citizens were to be at a "statutory sales price." Statutory sales prices in the case of tankers was defined in the act (sec. 3d) to mean "an amount equal to 87½ per centum of the prewar domestic cost of a tanker of that type" subject to adjustment set forth therein. Under certain conditions also set forth in the act (sec. 6) sales to non-citizens were authorized. By act of February 27, 1948 (62 Stat. 38), sales to non-citizens were prohibited after March 1, 1948.

13. On April 13, 1946, the Maritime Commission promulgated rules and regulations and supplements thereto (dated August 17, 1946) which recited that the estimated cost of T-1-M-BT tankers as of January 1, 1941, was $994,080, the domestic war cost $1,774,038. The unadjusted statutory sales price of 87½ per centum of the 1941 cost was $869,750. A limitation on the adjustments provided for in the act, was that in case of a tanker, no adjustments should reduce the statutory sales price to less than 50 percent of the domestic war cost, thus fixing a floor price of $887,019. The regulations and supplements were published in the Federal Register of April 23, 1946, April 30, 1946, and August 17, 1946. (11 Fed. Reg. 4459, 4702.)

14. In November, 1947, John E. Jacobsen, then an employee in the Bureau of Operations of the Maritime Commission,[2] advised Manual Rodriguez that there was a possibility that ten T-1 tankers might be purchased from the Maritime Commission for resale to Argentina.

At that time there was located in New York City an Argentine Government purchasing commission, known as the Argentine Naval Commission.

On December 19, 1947, plaintiff retained Homer C. Clay and John E. Jacobsen to represent it in bringing about the sale of ten or any less number of tankers, for which services Clay and Jacobsen were to receive on a contingent basis a fee of $25,000 for each tanker actually purchased.

15. On February 18, 1948, the plaintiff made written application to the Maritime Commission to purchase ten designated tankers at the statutory sales price. In the application, it was stated that two of the three stockholders and directors were citizens of the United States, namely, Manuel Rodriguez and Louis Russell. The application stated that plaintiff was not then and never had been engaged in the shipping business.

In connection with the application, there was forwarded to the Maritime Commission as evidence of good faith two certified checks, each for $1,000,000, drawn by the Argentine Naval Commission by its chief on February 14, 1948, payable to the Treasurer of the United States. One check was drawn on the Chase National Bank and the other on the National City Bank of New York, which banks certified the checks on February 16, 1948.

16. Prior to the formal application, Manuel Rodriguez had on December 30 and 31, 1947, conferred with members of the Argentine Naval Commission in New York and on December 31, 1947, wrote to that commission sending specifications of the ten tankers which had been discussed at the December 30 and 31 meetings.

The letter contained the following:

* * * * *

> *PRICE.*—Originally the price of these vessels, to the United States Government, was $1,774,038.00. If these vessels were to be built today, according to the

[2] Jacobson was on annual leave from August 31, 1947, to December 22, 1947, and on "furlough" thereafter to February 28, 1948.

present cost of labor, the price would be *$2,040,143.00* as you can easily verify.

The present basic sale price is $887,019.00 for each vessel, and we are selling them to you at the following prices:

1 to 5 vessels	$965,000.00 each.
6 to 8 vessels	950,000.00 each.
8 to 10 vessels	935,000.00 each.

INSPECTION.—They can be inspected as soon as you wish, since we already have the required permits from the U. S. Maritime Commission to go to inspect them, as we indicated to you.

PUBLIC SALE.—These vessels are not on public sale, but we have very good and well-founded reasons, according to the letters that I showed you, to believe that we can obtain them immediately. In the difference between the basic price and the price that we quoted you there would be included all the necessary expenses for obtaining the vessels for you, including transfer of "*titles*," change of "flag," transfer expenses, fees, etc. For this reason we believe this is a very convenient offer for you.

DELIVERY.—These vessels are to be delivered immediately.

We want it clearly understood that this offer is subject to the approval of the U. S. Maritime Commission, and in addition, we bind ourselves to obtain the "*flag*" change.

In the event that we are not able to obtain the change of flag, this sale becomes null and void and the deposit that you made by check to the name of the U. S. Maritime Commission will be returned to you immediately.[3]

On February 4, 1948, Clay had wired Rodriguez as follows:

> STRONG PROBABILITY THAT CONGRESS WILL PROHIBIT SALES WAR BUILT VESSELS TO FOREIGN COUNTRIES AFTER FEBRUARY 29. URGE APPLICATION BE FILED IMMEDIATELY.

Also, previous to the formal offer, plaintiff and the Argentine Naval Commission on February 14, 1948, entered

[3] This is a translation from the Spanish of the original letter.

into a contract whereby the Argentine Naval Commission agreed to purchase, and plaintiff agreed to sell, ten tankers for $935,000 each. The letter of agreement contained the following:

* * * * *

FOURTH.—The Seller promises to obtain a change of flag and an export permit, if it is necessary, so that these vessels can be legally transferred to the Government of the Republic of Argentina. It is expressly established that if for any reason the legal transfer of same cannot be effected, this Contract becomes null and void, and that neither party will demand from the other indemnification of any kind. In this event, the deposit made to the U. S. Maritime Commission in the offer to buy will be returned immediately to the Argentina Naval Commission.

FIFTH.—In order to effect the offer to purchase these vessels from the U. S. Maritime Commission, the Argentina Naval Commission delivers in advance to the Seller the sum of TWO MILLION U. S. DOLLARS (U. S. $2,000,000.00) in two checks made to the order of the Treasurer of the United tates; one for ONE MILLION U. S. DOLLARS (U. S. $1,000,000.00) against The National City Bank, No. 1359, and another for the same amount against The Chase National Bank, No. 1391, both signed on the same date as this Contract.

SIXTH.—It is expressly indicated that this Contract will be executed as a public document after the approval of the sale by the U. S. Maritime Commission.[4]

* * * * *

17. When the formal application was filed with the Maritime Commission on February 18, 1948, it was referred to various officers of the Maritime Commission for comment, making reference to the request that purchase would be on condition that transfer to Argentine registration be permitted. At a meeting of the Maritime Commission on March 1, 1948, the application for purchase of the ten tankers, for sale and transfer to a foreign registry and

[4] A translation from the Spanish.

flag was formally disapproved.[5] At 11:30 P. M., March 1, 1948, however, the sale of one tanker to plaintiff for transfer to Argentina was approved.

Senate J. R. 173 approved February 27, 1948, 62 Stat. 38, prohibited the sale of a war-built vessel to a non-citizen after March 1, 1948.

18. On March 5, 1948, Rodriguez wrote to the Argentine Naval Commission as follows.

> As you well know we presented our application to the U. S. Maritime Commission on February 18, 1948, for the right to purchase ten (10) petroleum tankers with the right to transfer the title and registry of the same to the Argentine flag.
>
> At 11:30 P. M., on March 1, 1948, one-half hour before such sales would become forbidden by law, we signed with the Maritime Commission for the purchase of one tanker.
>
> * * * * *
>
> Meanwhile, it was evident that a law would be enacted which would affect our application and on February 3, 1948, I personally informed you thereof by telephone. There was a great probability that the Congress would forbid the sale of these types of vessels to foreign countries following February 29, 1948, and the application had to be presented immediately.
>
> On February 18, 1948, our fears were realized. The House of Representatives of the United States passed a bill forbidding such sales to persons who were not citizens of this country, or representatives thereof, after March 1, 1948. A few days later the same bill was passed by the Senate and signed by the President of the United States. Hence, our application coincided with the Congressional action which discontinued the sale of the types of vessels in which we were interested, after March 1.
>
> The result was an "avalanche" of applications for these and other types of vessels for foreign governments and their representatives. A member of the

[5] On the same date similar action was taken with reference to other offers; one tanker for transfer to Panamanian flag and 3 tankers for transfer to the Argentine flag.

Maritime Commission informed us that they had more than forty applications for the purchase of the tankers which we were endeavoring to buy.

Not only did the demand increase due to the imminence of the date of expiration of the law, but on February 18, when our application was finally presented, only six tankers remained unsold. The other four which we wanted had already been sold prior to our application. The competition for these T-1 tankers produced a terrible pressure upon the Maritime Commission.

Each applicant, of course, tried to obtain favorable consideration for his application. As you well know, we were active. We contacted persons having high connections with the majority of the officials of the Maritime Commission and we received the strongest possible promises that they were going to give us two or more tankers, but they were unable to give them to us due to an application of the Standard Oil Company (a corporation of the United States) for three vessels for the service of the Dutch East India [sic], which application by law had to receive preference.

We continued and shall continue to maintain contact with members of the Maritime Commission and we had and still have officials of the United States making representations on our behalf. Likewise, thanks to the kind efforts on your part, the Argentine Embassy in Washington sent a note to the Department of State recommending the sale of these types of vessels to the Argentine, and, thereby, along with the influential persons whom we know in said Department of State, we have been able to obtain great pressure from the same in favor of our application. Needless to say, the promises made to us that we would receive two or more vessels did not materialize.

We are still endeavoring to obtain one additional T-1 tanker on the premise that we, the purchasers, are citizens of this country (a corporation of the State of New York) and that, therefore, the law does not deprive us of making these purchases. Furthermore, there is a remote possibility that we may obtain still another vessel, the one which they are endeavoring to

obtain for us. It may well be that we will be successful; however, at this time we cannot evaluate the possibilities.

* * * * *

You can rest assured that we will continue our efforts and, as we obtain favorable results, we will communicate the same to you.[6]

19. On March 7, 1948, plaintiff's attorney in fact, Homer C. Clay, wired the Secretary of the Maritime Commission as follows:

APPLICATION MANUEL RODRIGUEZ TRADING CORP HEREBY AMENDED TO ELIMINATE ALL REFERENCE TO TRANSFER OF SHIPS TO ARGENTINE REGISTRY APPLICANT DESIRES TO PURCHASE AS AMERICAN CITIZEN TERMS CASH ON DELIVERY WITH TWO MILLION DOLLARS NOW DEPOSITED WITH APPLICATION TO BE APPLIED ON PURCHASE PRICE.

On March 10, 1948, plaintiff filed a formal amendment to the application of February 18, 1948, by striking therefrom:

* * * * *

* * * all reference to the transfer of the vessels referred to therein to foreign flag or registry and to provide that the applicant will purchase any one or more of the vessels referred to in said application as a United States citizen (applicant is a New York corporation) for operation under the flag and registry of the United States and to further provide that should applicant be granted the right to purchase any vessel or vessels pursuant to its amended application, applicant will obtain the services of one of the established and experienced ship operating companies to operate said vessel or vessels.

20. March 11, 1948, plaintiff's amended application was referred to the Maritime Commission by memorandum from the appropriate officer, the Chief of the Large Vessel Sales Division, James L. Pimper, who recommended the sale of two T1-M-BT tankers with the advice that the "applicant wishes to eliminate original reference to trans-

[6] Translation from the Spanish.

fer to Argentine registry and purchase as an American Citizen" and to pay cash in full on delivery. The Commission was advised that:

> * * * * * *
>
> Applicant claims no shipping experience but states that it will obtain the services of one of the established and experienced ship operating companies to operate the vessels when purchased.
>
> * * * * * *
>
> * * * since the applicant offers to pay cash in full for the vessel, the Commission is justified in considering that the applicant possesses the necessary financial resources.
>
> * * * * * *
>
> Applicant proposes to operate the vessels in established tanker trades, chiefly from North Atlantic ports to the River Platte and occasionally from Venezuelan ports to the River Platte.
>
> * * * * * *

March 12, 1948, the Commission approved plaintiff's application as to three T–1 tankers.

By memorandum of March [illegible], 1948, Mr. Pimper advised the Commission that plaintiff had been "allocated the last three remaining tankers of this type" but the Navy Department had requested the transfer of one tanker for military operations so that he recommended that the action of March 12, 1948, approving the sale of three tankers be modified to approve of the sale of two only. This recommendation was approved by the Commission March 26, and on March 31, 1948, the Commission advised plaintiff's representative of the approval of the sale "for operation under United States flag," the terms of payment to be "cash in full on delivery."

21. Under date of March 31, 1948, plaintiff and the Argentine Naval Commission entered into a contract relating to the *Capitan* as follows:

> *FIRSTLY:* The Seller sells to the purchaser and the latter buys from the former, a Diesel tanker, T1–M–BT1, with the following description:

Former name: *Klickitat.*
Present new name: *Capitan.*
Builder's No.: 83.
U. S. Maritime Commission Hull No.: 2624.

The other characteristics of the said ship are already known by the Purchaser. This tanker is at present in the possession of the U. S. Maritime Commission.

SECONDLY: The seller, on February 18, 1948, with the previous authorization and in accordance with the Argentine Naval Commission, applied to the U. S. Maritime Commission for the purchase of ten T-1 tankers, which application was accompanied by the deposit of 2 certified checks drawn by the Argentine Naval Commission in favor of "The Treasurer of the United States" for the amount of $2,000,000.00 (two million dollars) and requested on that occasion the approval of the U. S. Maritime Commission to transfer the registration and title of the said ships to the Argentine flag.

THIRDLY: Since it is the desire of the Argentine Naval Commision to obtain more tankers like the ten opportunely offered, in order to satisfy the needs of the Argentine Navy, and in order not to lose the possibilities of purchasing which exist at present, Manuel Rodriguez Trading Corporation is requested to serve as intermediary in the acquisition of the aforementioned oil tankers, this commitment being subject to the feasible future transfer of the same to the Ministry of the Navy of the Argentine Republic. This transfer should be made when circumstances permit it to be done legally.

FOURTHLY: The aforementioned transfer must be made within four months after the signing of this contract. In case this commitment cannot be fulfilled, the Argentine Naval Commission will be able at the end of this time to grant an extension of two months, at the most, or to arrange the sale of those ships thus recovering the money invested up to that moment in the purchase, preservation, insurance, maintenance, etc., of them.

FIFTHLY: Therefore, and in consideration of the mutual benefits to be obtained in this contract, and

other good and valuable considerations, Manuel Rodriguez Trading Corporation and the Argentine Naval Commission mutually agree to the following:

A. The Corporation shall be able to modify the application dated February 18, 1948, made to the U. S. Maritime Commission in any way which may be necessary in order to obtain the approval for sale of the tankers to the party applying as a corporation of the United States.

B. The Corporation promises to try to obtain on its own account from the U. S. Maritime Commission the greatest number of tankers within the number of ten which appears on the application mentioned in A.

C. The certified checks of the Argentine Naval Commission for $2,000,000.00 (two million dollars) which are at present deposited with the U. S. Maritime Commission, will be able to remain there as a guarantee for the application as it has been modified, until May 31 of this year.

D. If the request is approved, the Corporation will be able to receive the title of the number of tankers which are granted to it and the money to pay for them will be turned over by the Argentine Naval Commission, at the official price of 887,019 dollars, fixed by the U. S. Maritime Commission, and in case the latter should change it, an attempt should be made to come to an agreement on it by both contracting parties.

E. Once the Corporation has received the title or titles of the ships as is mentioned in the preceding paragraph, the Corporation will take steps with the U. S. Maritime Commission to get its approval for the change of title to the Argentine Naval Commission, and of the flag and registration to the Argentine Republic and to obtain and provide for this Naval Commission without any expense to the Purchaser, all the necessary documentation so that the ships can be used without any obstacles by the Argentine Government.

F. When the Corporation has obtained the legal transfer of the title of ownership to the Argentine Naval Commission, the change of the flag to the Argentine Republic and the aforementioned documents the Commission will pay to Manuel Rodriguez Trading

Corporation the amount remaining between the price paid to the U. S. Maritime Commission and the prices fixed in the offer of December 31, 1947 and an explanation added on the day of the date.

G. In case the laws or governmental provisions make it impossible to obtain the legal transfer of the title to the Argentine Naval Commission and the change of flag to that of the Argentine Republic, both contracting parties will consult with one another for the purpose of finding an appropriate solution to the problem presented, and in case they cannot come to this agreement, they will proceed to sell the ships on the account of the Argentine Naval Commission, without any loss to the Corporation, and from the profits, 20% will be credited to Manuel Rodriguez Trading Corporation to compensate for any expenses which it might have incurred in the sale of the ships. In case the Government of the United States of North America should expropriate the ships, it is understood that the payment which it makes will immediately be transferred to the Argentine Naval Commission.

H. *Expenses for Insurance and Other Expenses:* The expenses for insurance as well as any other expenses, as for example, expenses for the wharf, towing, fuel, etc., will be paid by the Argentine Naval Commission. It is also understood that all the arrangements which are made for the insurance, wharf expenses, etc., will always be subject to the written approval of the Argentine Naval Commission.

SIXTHLY: From the moment this Contract is signed, the Argentine Naval Commission will be able to dispose of the ship in any way which it will deem convenient, but respecting the obligations of the flag.

SEVENTHLY: The Argentine Naval Commission will have a guarantee in this purchase by receiving in deposit from Manuel Rodriguez Trading Corporation, the titles or ownership of the ships and the receipts for the payments made by the said Corporation.

EIGHTHLY: Inspection: This ship has already been inspected by the Argentine Naval Commission, and it has accepted it.

As proof of the conformity of both contracting

parties, four copies of the same kind and for one single effect are signed in the offices of the Argentine Naval Commission, on March 31, 1948.[7]

Accepted by the Seller

Manuel Rodriguez (Signed)

MANUEL RODRIGUEZ TRADING CORPORATION

Accepted by the Purchaser

(Signature illegible)

ARGENTINE NAVAL COMMISSION

A similar contract relating to the *Sugarland* was made the same day.

22. In reliance upon representations that the tankers were purchased for operation under the flag of the United States, under date of April 6, 1948, the Maritime Commission entered into a formal sales contract for the sale of the *Capitan* and the *Sugarland* to plaintiff at a floor price of $887,919. A copy of the contract is printed as Exhibit A to the petition and is incorporated herein by reference.

23. The two checks drawn by the Argentine Naval Commission and deposited with the Maritime Commission were not applied as payment for the two tankers. The checks were subsequently returned uncashed, one in April 1948 and the other in June 1948 after payments of the purchase price of the two tankers had been completed.

24. A summary of the payments for the tankers as reflected by the records of the paintiff corporation is as follows:

1948:	*Capitan*	*Sugarland*	*Totals*
April 5	$88,701 90	$88,701 90	$177,403 80
May 7	600,000 00	600,000 00	1,200,000 00
June 7		194,223 10	194,223 10
Aug. 19	104,250 10		104,250 10
Subtotal	792,952 00	882,925 00	1,675,877 00
Less:			
Nov. 9, 1948, refund by the U. S. Maritime Commission for class work allowance	22,022 42	15,259 37	37,281 79
Net payments for vessels	770,929 58	867,665 63	1,638,595 21

[7] Translation from the Spanish.

Other Costs:			
(a) Payment for repairs (under par. IV, exhibit A of contract) upon delivery		20,834.01	
Less refund to plaintiff, Oct. 17, 1950		20,729.01	
Net additional cost on *Sugarland*		42 00	42 00
(b) Payment to U. S. Maritime Commission upon delivery for consumable stores	5,516 00	7,512 00	13,028 00
(c) Inspection, repair., insurance, and agency expense	133,908 78	62,690 59	196,599 37
Total cost	910,354.36	937,910.22	1,848,264.58

In accordance with the agreements, the Argentine Naval Commission advanced sums to plaintiff for payments of the tankers at the times, and in the amounts, as follows:

	Captan	*Sugarland*	*Totals*
April 2, 1948	$88,701 90	$88,701 90	$177,403 80
April 28, 1948	798,317 10	798,317 10	1,596,634 20
Subtotal (official price)	887,019 00	887,019 00	1,774,038 00
Dec. 23, 1948, balance	77,981 00	77,981 00	155,962 00
Total price of Dec. 31, 1947	965,000 00	965,000 00	1,930,000 00
Add:			
Oct. 25, 1949, additional payment for certain expense as provided under 5th (II) of the agreements	41,826 07	30,397 80	72,223 87
Total of amounts received	1,006,826 07	995,397 80	2,002,223 87

The funds advanced by the Argentine Naval Commission for the full official price of the ships were received by plaintiff corporation before it was required to make such payments to the United States Maritime Commission under its agreement to purchase them.

Plaintiff corporation's records contained no evidence of the receipt of the $200,000 deposit required by the United States Maritime Commission in December 1948, upon the approval of the transfer of title of the ships to the Argentine Naval Commission, nor of any refund of any portion of the same.

On the basis of the above accounts, the plaintiff corporation made a gross profit on the acquisition and transfer of the two tankers of $153,959.29.

25. On October 21, 1948, the plaintiff transmitted to the Maritime Commission application for the approval required by sections 9 and 41 of the Shipping Act of 1916, as amended, of proposed transfer to Argentine registry and

sale to an alien, namely the Argentine Naval Commission, of each of the two tankers. The applications were on forms of the Maritime Commission which required statements by the applicant designed to elicit information desired by the Maritime Commission for consideration of the requests.

Item No. 3 of the application form requested information as to the total complement of the vessel and whether employment would be available for the officers and crew if the ship was sold. To this inquiry, plaintiff stated that no officers or crew were employed because the vessel was not in operation.

Item 4 related to the operation of vessel under American registry. To this, plaintiff stated, that because of facts set forth in the attached memorandum, the vessel had not been operated since owner acquired title. Under this item it was also stated that the vessel had been offered for sale to American citizens; that it had been on the market for sale for three months prior to the application and no offers had been received. It stated further that the proposed sales price was the "actual cost of vessel to owner," to be paid in cash.

Attached to the application was a letter from the Argentine Naval Commission under date of August 30, 1948, as follows:

> In reply to the attached ad which appeared in the New York Journal of Commerce, August 27, 1948, there is no evidence of the number of T-1 tanker [sic] you have for sale. For this reason, we herewith submit our bid to purchase such T-1 tankers as you may have for sale up to five vessels. We are prepared to pay in U. S. currency for five vessels or whatever number of vessels you may have less than five. In order to arrange for an inspection and to discuss the price, please contact us at once.

The "attached ad" was as follows:

> T-1 Tankers For Sale
> U. S. flag. Immediate delivery
> Principals only. All cash in dollars
> Box Y 955, Journal of Commerce

Another attachment was in part as follows:

> * * * * *
>
> When the Commission offered the tankers to the Manuel Rodriguez Trading Corporation in March 1948, the

company was influenced to accept them by the fact that the demand for tankers at that time was so strong as to be perhaps unprecedented in peacetime. Private charter rates stood well above the Maritime Commission rates and the market price of vessels generally well above the statutory and floor prices. This situation induced applicant to believe that domestic employment of the vessels would be possible and profitable.

The company accepted the vessels with the knowledge that it could operate, charter or sell the vessels in the domestic market, and or under appropriate and meritorious circumstances could apply to the Commission in accordance with the law for approval to change registry.

Although the vessels were allocated in March 1948, when the tanker market was strong, it was not until August 20, 1948, that repairs were completed on the second vessel and title was tendered to the Manuel Rodriguez Trading Corporation. During this period a drastic change occurred in the tanker market. Charter rates fell below the Maritime Commission scale, and there became a surplus of tonnage.

* * * * *

Notwithstanding the adverse and discouraging market situation, the company has made diligent efforts to employ the vessels profitably in the domestic market. Advertisments offering the vessels for sale were placed in the *New York Times* and the *New York Journal of Commerce* on August 25, 26, 27 and 29. In its efforts to find a market for the vessels, the company has been in frequent communication with brokers and operators in the oil transportation business. It has been found that no demand for these vessels exists. The only promising inquiries were from sources that desired to purchase for foreign transfer.

* * * * *

The lack of domestic market for T-1 tankers is not surprising in view of the characteristics and history of these particular vessels. The Manuel Rodriguez Trading Corporation is now informed that these vessels were never designed with any idea that after the war they would be useful or practical for ordinary commercial

use. It is generally conceded that T–1 tankers are too small, too slow, and too expensive to operate to compete successfully in the present market. Although a crew of approximately 34 is required to operate the vessels, their capacity is only approximately 31,000 barrels, their speed only 10 knots. These characteristics place T–1 tankers at a distinct competitive disadvantage in relation to the average tanker which employs a crew of perhaps 40, has a speed of 14 to 16 knots and a carrying capacity four times as great as that of a T–1 tanker.

These vessels were intended for use by the U. S. Navy and by foreign governments. Perhaps the best indication of their lack of suitability for domestic operation is the fact that, with three exceptions (excluding the Manuel Rodriguez Trading Corporation, the Maritime Commission has sold these vessels to foreign buyers. The following record of the disposition of T–1 tankers is significant:

Argentine Government	2
Manuel Rodriguez Trading Corp. for Argentine Government	1
Government of Turkey	1
Compagnie Petroleo Lago (Venezuela)	1
Standard Oil (Central America)	1
Dutch Subsidiaries of Standard Oil	7
Five sold domestic as follows:	
Manuel Rodriguez Trading Corp.	2
Standard of California	1
Texas Co	1
Tidewater Oil Co	1

Although the company lacks direct information as to the use to which the three other American buyers have put their tankers, it is believed that they are used by their owners for transportation of their own products in special situations where shallow draft small vessels can be utilized and expense of operation and speed are of no great importance.

Still another indication of the undesirability of T–1 tankers for American operations may be seen in the fact that the Maritime Commission still holds three of these vessels and apparently is unable to dispose of them to any American buyer.

After more than two years of availability, including the recent period of drastic oil shortage, no American buyers found these three ships desirable.

From the above indications it therefore seems clear that little domestic demand exists or is ever likely to exist for T–1 tankers.

To retain these vessels under American registry is apt to mean that they will lie idle. If they are transferred to foreign registry they will be in use and to that extent help prevent worldwide shortage in oil transportation.

The initial cost and repairs for the owner's account of the *Capitan* and *Sugarland* exceeded $1,800,000.00. The cost of maintenance is rapidly becoming an oppressive burden, and constitutes a grave threat to the solvency of the company.

Under these circumstances it is hoped that the Commission will see fit to grant the application of the Manuel Rodriguez Trading Corporation for the right to sell and deliver these two T–1 tankers to a citizen or to the government of the Argentine and for the right to transfer registry of the vessels consistent with said sale.

26. While the letter of August 30, 1948, attached to the application for authority to sell to a foreigner indicated that the Argentine Naval Commission was offering to buy in response to the blind ad in the New York Journal of Commerce, the Argentine Naval Commission had contracted with plaintiff corporation to buy the two tankers owned by plaintiff corporation on March 31, 1948, and had advanced the funds by which they had been purchased by plaintiff. Plaintiff, having delivered to the Argentine Naval Commission the bills-of-sale and master carpenter's certificate, documents necessary for American registration (46 U. S. C. sec. 24), sale by plaintiff to American purchasers for domestic operation would have required the Argentine Naval Commission to consent thereto, at least to the extent of returning to plaintiff these documents. Plaintiff, however, in August 1948, inserted the advertisement mentioned in the attachment to the request for authority (finding 25) as well as similar advertisement in the New York Times of August 29, 1948. At least six responses were received to the advertisements not counting the

Argentine Naval Commission. Four responses indicated a desire for foreign registration and two suggested domestic use. Plaintiff did not communicate with any of the 6 responders.

The application for transfer authority stated that the vessels were to be sold to Argentina at the actual cost to plaintiff. Homer Clay, plaintiff's attorney in fact, on November 9, 1948, wrote to the Maritime Commission, that Mr. Rodriguez had instructed him to advise that the proposed sales price to the Argentine Naval Commission was $912,000 for each tanker subject to adjustment for the heating coils and other items in the original cost of the vessels to plaintiff.

27. Following the allocation of the two tankers to plaintiff, the Argentine Naval Commision was consulted by Rodriguez with respect to actions taken in connection with the tankers as follows:

When the *Sugarland* arrived in Boston, April 28, 1948, the Naval Commission's engineers were on hand to inspect it. A letter dated May 19, 1948, from Admiral Colonna of the Argentine Naval Commission to Rodriguez requested information "concerning the transportation of naphtha and petroleum derivatives in the tank vessels that we have obtained from your firm." Rodriguez promptly obtained and furnished such information to the Naval Commission by letter of May 25, 1948, without questioning the statement. When work was to be done on the *Sugarland* or *Capitan*, the plans were submitted by plaintiff to the Argentine Naval Commission in advance. When the sale of the *Sugarland* was closed with the Maritime Commission, June 8, 1948, the bill-of-sale and master carpenter's certificate were delivered to Homer C. Clay by the Maritime Commission and these documents together with a memorandum of the closing and a statement of account were transmitted to the Naval Commission by Rodriguez June 10, 1948, and the same action was taken with respect to the *Capitan* documents later. The *Sugarland* was delivered to Rodriguez at Hoboken, New Jersey, on June 8, 1948. Pursuant to arrangements between Rodriguez and Admiral Colonna the Argentine Naval Commission stationed a crew of about fifteen men aboard both the *Sugarland* and *Capitan* to act as watchmen pending the contemplated transfer to

the Naval Commission. In August 1948 the Argentine Naval Commission also sent its plans and specifications for modifications and repairs on the *Sugarland* to Rodriguez in order that he might obtain quotations from various firms.

28. Plaintiff's books included both the *Sugarland* (which was delivered June 8, 1948) and the *Capitan* as part of plaintiff's merchandise inventory and as having been sold to the Argentine Naval Commission in April 1948. Plaintiff's accounting records show that the tankers were purchased for resale and not for operation. Plaintiff's books were revised as of June 30, 1948, and then showed the Argentine Naval Commission had advanced $965,000 on each of the sales contracts for the two tankers, the vessels not having then been formally delivered. Plaintiff's Federal income-tax return for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1948, is consistent with the view that the two tankers were purchased for sale and not for operation.

29. Neither plaintiff nor its president, Rodriguez, had ever been engaged in the shipping business and had no experience in the operation of tankers. After acquiring title to the two tankers, plaintiff made no efforts to obtain the services of a ship operating company to operate the vessels. No officers or crews were hired.

30. Plaintiff's application for authority to transfer the vessels was considered by the chief of the Bureau of Government Aids of the Maritime Commission who, on November 26, 1948, recommended to the Commission that the application be denied. The application came before the Commission at a meeting of December 2, 1948. It was then considered but not acted upon.

At a meeting of the Commission on December 7, 1948, Homer C. Clay and Ralph Immell represented plaintiff and after referring to the information contained in the application, advised the Commission further that plaintiff's president had invested his entire personal fortune of $1,800,000 in the tankers; that in order to cut down expenses, the crews had been reduced and guards put on board and that plaintiff was obliged to sell the tankers or go into bankruptcy. It was also represented that the proposed sales price of $9,812,000 per tanker adjusted for the value of the heating coils, might enable Rodriguez to break even but he stood to lose $45,000.

One of the commissioners at this meeting inquired of plaintiff's representatives as follows:

> Let me ask one other question. I don't know whether you have it of your own knowledge, but it would have a bearing. Is there any information that you have received, directly or indirectly, that could lead into a possible implication that your client had an arrangement in advance made with the Argentine interests prior to their filing an application, with the view that they would later come before this Commission and seek for approval of the sale and transfer?

The following answer was given by Mr. Clay:

> No, sir. I think it would be absolutely impossible for such an implication to be made. I advised Mr. Rodriguez when the new law went into effect that he must buy those ships, own them outright, that he must pay for them himself, that he could not even make any commitment or agreement to sell in the future. He has had that understanding and I have made him adhere most rigorously to the law in regard to his purchase of these vessels.

Thereafter the Commission took action as follows:

* * * * *

> A motion was made by Commissioner Carson, seconded by Commissioner Mellen, that the application of Manuel Rodriguez Trading Corporation, New York, New York, for the approval required by Section 9 of the Shipping Act 1916, as amended (46 U. S. C. 808) of the sale of 2 T1-M-BT1 tankers to the Argentine Naval Commission and the transfer of said vessels to Argentine registry and flag be approved, upon the condition that any and all allowances made to the Manuel Rodriguez Trading Corporation for placing the vessel in class and all monies due and owing the Commission by the said Manuel Rodriguez Trading Corporation shall be paid to the Commission prior to the issuance of any orders authorizing the transfer of flag and registry of the said vessels and the Company waives any claims for allowances.

Upon a vote being taken, Chairman Smith and Commissioners Carson and Mellen voted "yes," and Commissioners Coddaire and McKeough voted "nay," to the foregoing motion.

The proper officers of the Commission were authorized and directed to take any and all actions necessary and proper to carry the action of the Commission as above set forth fully into effect.

By memorandum of December 9, 1948, the Commission advised the Chief, Bureau of Government Aids, that at its meeting of December 7 it had considered his memorandum and approved plaintiff's application, part of which memorandum reads as follows:

* * * * * * *

upon the condition that any and all allowances made to the Manuel Rodriguez Trading Corporation for placing the vessels in class and all monies due and owing the Commission by the said Manuel Rodriguez Trading Corporation shall be paid to the Commission prior to the issuance of any orders authorizing the transfer of flag and registry of the said vessels and the company waives any claims for allowances.

31. On December 10, 1948, the Commission advised plaintiff as follows:

This is to advise you that the Maritime Commission at its meeting December 7, 1948, considered and approved, pursuant to Section 9 of the Shipping Act 1916, as amended (46 U. S. C. 808), the sale of your two T1-M-BT1 tankers *SUGARLAND*, O. N. 249212, and *CAPITAN*, O. N. 256418, to the Argentine Naval Commission, an agency of the Argentine Government, and the transfer of said vessels to Argentine registry and flag, "upon the condition that, prior to the issuance of formal Transfer Orders in evidence of the approval of the transfer of these tankers to Argentine ownership and registry as above set forth, any and all allowances made to your corporation for placing these vessels in class and all monies due and owing the Commission by your corporation in connection with the sale by the Commis-

sion shall be paid (or provision therefor by way of deposit be made) to the Commission and upon the receipt from your company of a waiver of any claims for allowances."

Since the exact amount of these allowances and adjustments has not yet been determined and, in view of the fact that you desire that the said Transfer Orders be issued as early as possible, you are requested to deposit with the Commission a certified check for $200,000.00, upon the receipt of which the Commission will issue the aforesaid Transfer Orders. If the final amount of your indebtedness is found to be less than the amount of your deposit, the difference will be refunded to you. If additional sums are required to meet your indebtedness, you will deposit such additional sums to the Commission upon request.

Your Counsel has informed us that you will wish to request the Commission's reconsideration of the appropriateness of certain of these charges against you. It is understood that the deposit of the above-mentioned certified check will not preclude you from requesting the Commission for such a reconsideration, but it is also understood that any future action by the Commission on this matter will be acceptable to you as final.

Plaintiff accepted the prescribed conditions in its letter dated December 14, 1948, which states:

Receipt is hereby acknowledged of letter signed by Mr. A. J. Williams, Secretary of the United States Maritime Commission, dated December 10, 1948, advising of Commission approval on December 7, 1948, of the sale by this Corporation of the two tankers *SUGAR LAND* and *CAPITAN* to the Argentine Naval Commission, an agency of the Argentine Government and the transfer of said vessels to Argentine registry and flag, upon and subject to the conditions therein contained.

The Manuel Rodriguez Trading Corporation, a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the State of New York, with offices at 220 Broadway, New York 7, New York, hereby accepts and agrees to the conditions contained in said letter and pursuant to the

terms and conditions thereof, herewith delivers to the United States Maritime Commission a certified check bearing date December 13, 1948, and No. 2419, drawn upon The Chase National Bank of the City of New York, Rockefeller Center Branch, payable to the order of the United States Maritime Commission in the amount of $200,000, drawn by the Argentine Naval Commission, signed by officials designated as Accountant and Chief, Naval Commission, respectively, to be held in a special deposit by the Maritime Commission subject to the terms and conditions in said letter of December 10, 1948.

Subsequent to the exchange of the correspondence dated December 10 and 14, 1948, the Commission delivered transfer orders to plaintiff authorizing the sale of the tankers to the Argentine Naval Commission and their transfer to Argentine registry and flag. The transfer orders did not recite the conditions under which issued because neither the Commission's regulations nor practice required this.

32. In fixing the price for these two tankers, the Maritime Commission reduced the floor price of $887,019 by the sum of $135,442.79 as the cost of putting the vessels in class to operate under the flag of the United States. In order to comply with the conditions attached to the grant of authority to transfer the vessels to Argentina, there was deposited by plaintiff a certified check of the Argentine Naval Commission dated December 13, 1948, for $200,000 to cover this allowance.

On April 20, 1949, the Commission advised plaintiff as follows with regard to the requirements:

* * * * *

As to paragraph 5, the Commission, as above indicated, required your company, as a condition of its approval of the transfer to Argentine registry and flag, to deposit with it the sum of $200,000 to insure that all class allowances and moneys due the Commission from your company in connection with the sale would be repaid to the Commission. This sum is still on deposit and no part has been refunded to you. The Commission has agreed to reconsider the appropriateness of certain of these charges against you upon the condition

that any future action by the Commission on this matter will be acceptable to you as final.

On June 30, 1949, Clay and Immell filed a formal application on plaintiff's behalf repeating the same representation as before as to the sale to Argentina and stated that the sale occurred "after issuance of the foreign transfer orders," and as plaintiff had sold the vessels to Argentina at the price paid by plaintiff to the Maritime Commission, plaintiff could not be reimbursed by the Argentine Commission for the refund of the class allowance, and

> * * * At the time these ships were purchased from the Maritime Commission there was no understanding that I know of, with anybody, that our client would appear subsequently and ask for an order to resell. It was definitely stated by people in authority for the Commission that no such arrangement would be tolerated.
>
> * * * * * * *
>
> * * * If this were purely a bookkeeping entry, we wouldn't be here. If the Rodriguez Trading Corporation, having purchased these ships, had let them sit idle and then subsequently sold them to the Argentine Naval Commission, we feel of course that in that case these allowances that you would make should be wiped out and the Rodriguez Trading Corporation should not profit by the extent of the allowances made for putting the ships in class.

The Commission denied the request on August 12, 1949, and plaintiff was so advised. Had the vessels been sold to a non-citizen, the allowance of $135,442.79 below the statutory sales price would not have been made. Also, during the time that the Commission was authorized to sell to non-citizens, it made a charge to the buyer of the unrecouped cost of repairs made subsequent to January 1, 1947, less depreciation at the rate of $6,000 per month for each month of operation. This, for the *Sugarland* would have amounted to a charge of $49,894.01. As the policy respecting sales to citizens required a charge of the cost of unrecouped repairs made after July 1, 1947, the charge in the case of the *Sugarland* was $42 only, or $49,852.01 less.

33. The two vessels involved were built in 1945 and the Commission determined that the domestic war cost was $1,774,038 each. This amount was approximately 15 percent less than the 1947 costs. The Argentine Naval Commission offered to pay $965,000 plus for each vessel in March 1948.

34. The evidence establishes that prior to March 1, 1948, and subsequently, the plaintiff was acting, in effect, as agent for the Argentine Naval Commission in acquiring these vessels and that at all times plaintiff planned in one way or another to accomplish the transfer of these vessels from the Maritime Commission to Argentina.

Conclusion of Law

Upon the foregoing findings of fact, which are made a part of the judgment herein, the court concludes as a matter of law that the plaintiff, Manuel Rodriguez Trading Corporation, is not entitled to recover and its petition is dismissed.

The court further concludes as a matter of law that the defendant is entitled to recover of and from the plaintiffs, Manuel Rodriguez Trading Corporation and Manuel Rodriguez, on its counterclaim the sum of forty-nine thousand, eight hundred fifty-two dollars and one cent ($49,852.01).

APPENDIX B

Merchant Ship Sales Act of 1946 (50 U.S.C. 1737, 1739):

"Sec. 1737. (a) Any citizen of the United States may make application to the Commission to purchase a war-built vessel, under the jurisdiction and control of the Commission, at the statutory sales price. . . . the Commission determines that the applicant possesses the ability, experience, financial resources, and other qualifications, necessary to enable him to operate and maintain the vessel under normal competitive conditions, and that such sale will aid in carrying out the policies of this Act the Commission shall sell such vessel to the applicant at the statutory sales price.

(b) At the time of sale, the purchaser shall pay to the Commission at least 25 per centum of the statutory sales price. The balance of the statutory sales price shall be payable in not more than twenty equal annual installments, with interest on the portion of the statutory sales price remaining unpaid, at the rate of 3½ per centum per annum, or shall be payable under such other amortization provisions which permit the purchaser to accelerate payment of the unpaid balance as the Commission deems satisfactory. The obligation of the purchaser with respect to payment of such unpaid balance with interest shall be secured by a preferred mortgage on the vessel sold.

(c) The contract of sale, and the mortgage given to secure the payment of the unpaid balance of the purchase price, shall not restrict the lawful or proper use or operation of the vessel."

"Sec. 1739. (a) Any person not a citizen of the United States may make application to the Commission to purchase a war-built vessel (other than a P-2 type or other passenger type and other than a Liberty type collier or tanker), under the jurisdiction and control of the Commission. If the Commission determines—

(1) that the applicant has the financial resources, ability, and experience necessary to enable him to fulfill all obligations with respect to payment of any deferred portion of the purchase price, and that sale of the vessel to him would not be inconsistent with any policy of the United States in permitting foreign sales

under section 9 of the Shipping Act, 1916, as amended; and

(2) after consultation with the Secretary of the Navy, that such vessel is not necessary to the defense of the United States; and

(3) that such vessel is not necessary to the promotion and maintenance of an American merchant marine described in section 2; and

(4) that for a reasonable period of time, which in the case of tankers and "C" type vessels shall not end before ninety days after publication of the applicable prewar domestic cost in the Federal Register under subsection 3(c) of this Act, such vessel has been available for sale at the statutory sales price to citizens of the United States, or for charter under section 5 to citizens of the United States, and that no responsible offer has been made by a citizen of the United States to purchase or charter such vessels;

then the Commission is authorized to approve the application and sell such vessel to the applicant at not less than the statutory sales price. In case of application submitted by a citizen of the Commonwealth of the Philippines, paragraph (4) of this subsection shall not apply. Notwithstanding paragraph (4) of this subsection, not to exceed ten "C" type vessels, except C-3's, may be sold to non-citizens at any time after such date of publication at not less than the statutory sales price.

(b) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no war-built vessel shall be sold to any person not a citizen of the United States, except in accordance with subsection (a), or upon terms or conditions more favorable than those at which such war-built vessel is offered to a citizen of the United States, but where the vessel so sold is being transferred to foreign registry and flag, the mortgage securing the unpaid balance of the purchase price and interest thereon shall contain provisions according to such mortgage the priorities over other liens and encumbrances accorded such mortgages on merchant vessels under the laws of such registry and flag."

Public Law 423, 80th Cong. (b) (62 Stat. 38): "Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a), no con-

tract of sale under section 6 of the Merchant Ship Sales Act of 1946 shall be made after March 1, 1948; and nothing contained in this or any other Act shall be deemed to authorize the United States Maritime Commission to charter any war-built vessel (as defined in the Merchant Ship Sales Act of 1946) to any person who is not a citizen of the United States (as defined in the Merchant Ship Sales Act of 1946)."

Shipping Act, 1916 (46 U.S.C. 808, 839, 39 Stat., 728):

"Sec. 9. That any vessel purchased, chartered, or leased from the board, by persons who are citizens of the United States, may be registered or enrolled and licensed, as a vessel of the United States and entitled to the benefits and privileges appertaining thereto: Provided, That foreign-built vessels admitted to American registry or enrollment and license under this Act, and vessels owned by any corporation in which the United States is a stockholder, and vessels sold, leased, or chartered by the board to any person, a citizen of the United States, as provided in this Act, may engage in the coastwise trade of the United States while owned, leased, or chartered by such a person.

Every vessel purchased, chartered, or leased from the board shall, unless otherwise authorized by the board, be operated only under such registry or enrollment and license. Such vessels while employed solely as merchant vessels shall be subject to all laws, regulations, and liabilities governing merchant vessels, whether the United States be interested therein as owner, in whole or in part, or hold any mortgage, lien, or other interest therein.

Except as provided in section 611 of the Merchant Marine Act, 1936, as amended, it shall be unlawful, without the approval of the United States Maritime Commission, to sell, mortgage, lease, charter, deliver, or in any manner transfer, or agree to sell, mortgage, lease, charter, deliver, or in any manner transfer, or agree to sell, mortgage, lease, charter, deliver, or in any manner transfer, to any person not a citizen of the United States, or transfer or place under foreign registry or flag, any vessel or any interest therein owned

in whole or in part by a citizen of the United States and documented under the laws of the United States, or the last documentation of which was under the laws of the United States.

Any such vessel, or any interest therein, chartered, sold, transferred, or mortgaged to a person not a citizen of the United States or placed under a foreign registry or flag, or operated, in violation of any provision of this section shall be forfeited to the United States, and whoever violates any provision of this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to a fine of not more than $5,000, or to imprisonment for not more than five years, or both."

"Section 41. That whenever by said section nine or thirty-seven the approval of the board is required to render any act or transaction lawful, such approval may be accorded either absolutely or upon such conditions as the board prescribes. Whenever the approval of the board is accorded upon any condition a statement of such condition shall be entered upon its record and incorporated in the same document or paper which notifies the applicant of such approval. A violation of such condition so incorporated shall constitute a misdemeanor and shall be punishable by fine and imprisonment in the same manner, and shall subject the vessel, stocks, bonds, or other subject matter of the application conditionally approved to forfeiture in the same manner, as though the Act conditionally approved had been done without the approval of the board, but the offense shall be deemed to have been committed at the time of the violation of the condition.

Whenever by this Act the approval of the board is required to render any act or transaction lawful, whoever knowingly makes any false statement of a material fact to the board, or to any member thereof, or to any officer, attorney, or agent thereof for the purpose of securing such approval, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to a fine of not more than $5,000, or to imprisonment for not more than five years, or both."